

Subj: **Gert and Brian head to Kaslo**  
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Hi All -

You're in trouble, I'm on the road again. What initiates a trip like this? Can be as simple as getting this email:

I have just moved to this town of 1000 people this October. Kaslo is a beautiful and isolated town - voted one of the ten most beautiful in Canada and it is in the center of the mountains on beautiful Kootenay Lake. Anyway, last weekend 2000 motorcyclists camped out in a big camp ground near here to spend the weekend driving the road that goes from here to an old deserted mining town called Sandon. This is an amazingly twisted road through very beautiful scenery of lakes and mountains. Anyway, to my surprise I was told "wait until the Lamborghini and Ferrari clubs come through. They do these roads every year." I am finding out that this area is considering a great sporting drive area. I live on the road to Sandon and watched these motorcycles go past all weekend. I have done this road several times with my Cobra and if I had to count turns to compare it with the Dragons Tail, I think it would hold it's own.

That's enough provocation for me! So I punched it into the GPS, and she says it's less than 500 miles away, and she will start out by sending me over the Mountain Loop Hwy (20). How can one refuse?

"It was a dark and rainy day..." well, not all that bad, but I figured if I could get over the pass between showers today, all would be well on the east side. And indeed it was. I don't know how many times I've been over this pass, but I am in awe every time. For example, this is part of the scenery:



I ran into some classic cars (like this cool '34 Ford convert) at a restaurant. One of those restaurants that say "Good Food," so you already know that the converse is true. I ran into little groups of these cars, one after another, so I had to stop and chat. Turns out that it is a club from Roseburg Oregon, there are over a hundred cars involved, and they have been up the coast to Whistler, going to Winthrop for a day or two, then heading south. I asked how it was going, and one guy said that they were glad that they had him, "Mr. NAPA," along with his trunk full of tools. Lots of rods, 55-57 Chevs, etc.



I don't know about Kaslo, a motorcyclist that I ran into from Alberta (riding a red version of Gert) told me that it's great riding, but look out for deer and turkeys. I'm waiting for the turkey crossing signs!

Anyway, tonight I made it up to Osoyoos BC, just north of the border on Hwy 97. Situated on a beautiful lake (Osoyoos Lake of course), its a very resorty area. Matter of fact, they claim that it's in the middle of Canada's only desert. I had never heard of it, yet it is so close.

I drove within about 15 miles of Conconully. Fortunately, I wasn't in the Jeep or truck, else wise it would have automatically pulled off at Loup Loup and a beer would have popped out of the cooler. You fisherman know what I mean.

I'm wearing my new BMW gloves that I got for free. They have a rubber wiper blade built into one finger for clearing rain off your face shield. So, if I get mad at somebody, do I give them "the blade?" I guess not, wrong finger.

I'll let you know if Kaslo is as good as it sounds!

Brian/Dad

Subj: **Gert & Brian go to Kaslo (2)**  
Date: 7/15/2006 9:05:14 PM Pacific Standard Time  
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Hello -

After departing from Osoyoos (I got a really early start - they were still serving continental breakfast!) I've headed east across Hwy 3 in Canada.

By the way, this is what Osoyoos looks like as you climb the mountains out of town:



There are a lot of mining sites along the way (mostly copper, but some gold), which is just north of the border. It makes me think the "54-40 or fight" issue must have been important to a lot of people. Evidently copper went down in value about 1918, and most of the mines closed. I wonder if they would be feasible again today with the high cost of copper?

Hwy 3 is beautiful, winding through the woods. I'm kind of surprised to see so much Hem/Fir this far inland rather than pine, it seems endless. Of course we aren't getting much of it since our government has created such import barriers (I think about 18% import penalty); of course that drives the price of our lumber about that much higher. Lots of water along the road, here are some typical views that you see as you motor along:



Eventually, I got onto 3A, and it even got prettier. I stopped for lunch in Nelson. Beautiful tourist town on a lake. If anybody wants to make this trip with company, I'm sure the significant other wouldn't have any trouble staying busy there for the day while you went the Kaslo loop.

I did make it to Kaslo, here's a map of what the loop looks like that was recommended:



New Denver is a beautiful town too, here's a look from the park downtown:



The roads around the loop were indeed nice. Most of the time you are following a river or lake. Unfortunately, they were doing some repaving, and there were a lot of motor homes and campers along the way, impeding progress. A Ducati came by pretty quickly, and Gert jerked at my sleeve, saying "I can keep up with him if you're up to it." I had to tell her that she should have asked about 25 years ago, too late for this guy to be going that fast.

South of New Denver I ran into a nice guy with a BSA Hornet Lightning. Nice looking bike:



He was on his way to a concert, but the bike wasn't cooperating too well, even with fuel additive it was pinging ("pinking" for you Brits) really badly. He was letting it cool down while he was cooling himself with a brew or two - how he pulled them out of his compact luggage, I have no idea. Must have forgot his clothes.

At the end of the day, I finished the loop and ended up in Castlegar. I haven't quite decided which direction to go on the way home. The GPS suggests 3, but I might drop down earlier, or continue all the way across on 3. Found a nice old fashioned hotel here. My favorite type, non-chain with trees and chairs in the front. Nice place to spend the night.

I may think twice about going back to Nelson. After lunch she gave me the machine to OK the purchase, then enter a tip. So I put in 2 bucks for the tip. She looked at me a little strange, which I couldn't figure out at the time. Now I pull out the receipt and see that the tip was \$.02. I guess you gotta push some zeros after the two. Oops. Next time I'll put in a couple extra zeros to make up for this.

For you riders, I've tried a new set of ear buds that are made by Aerostich. They are a little spendy, but work really well. The main difference between these and other ones I've tried is that they attenuate the outside noise a lot (3 dB). Consequently your helmet wind noise goes away, and you can hear music at a much lower volume. I think these are better for your ears than alternatives, plus I think an iPod (or equivalent) would have enough power to make the sound plenty loud without further amplification. The only down side is that they are a little tough to get into your ears correctly, if they aren't just right, you either get wind noise or they are a little uncomfortable.

I think in the future I'll think a little more about the sun. For example this morning (going mostly east) I had the sun in my eyes all morning, then this afternoon (mostly going west), same thing. Had I thought to shift by half a day could have been the other way around. So much for getting up early -- have to sleep until noon next time.

I'll motor home in the next day or two, so unless something interesting happens, I probably won't be sending another email. I do recommend a trip like this to you all, even if in a car. We have so much beautiful country so close to us.

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Well, I didn't send that, so here it is the next night and I just rolled into the driveway at home after a long, but pleasant day. The trip was a little over a thousand miles, which is a little too much for three days on a bike, but a little short for four. However, if I were to do it again I would take the extra day and do a few less miles every day. More relaxed, and probably safer too since you aren't tired as the day goes on. Most of this travel is on curvy mountain roads which takes a little more energy than freeway flying. You also have to look out for deer. I did see three on the road during the trip. No turkeys though. But a sheep warning sign and one moose caution.

I motored back on Hwy 3, and down through Sumas, just to be different.

In reflection, I really enjoy traveling in Canada. For one thing, I like their currency, sure makes a lot more sense than ours since they make regular use of \$1 and \$2 coins. People seem plenty nice, although to be a good US ambassador I go out of my way to be the same instead of my normal grouchy self. I don't like how they don't allow radar detectors, although they aren't illegal to have there, you just can't turn them on. I did see a number of them in use though, maybe they aren't all that strict about enforcement. I did like the more northern Canadian roads I traveled last summer better -- there is a lot less traffic and less people in general. Less water though. I think Canadians are even more prone to have travel trailers or motor homes than here. Probably avoiding weekends would have been better. I saw a camper pulling a pop-up trailer. How's that for two-bedroom accommodations?

Well, until Gert grabs me again next time (how do you say no to a woman?), I'll sign off. Hope you enjoyed the trip too! Keep me posted on your next journey.

Regards,

Brian/Dad